Implementing the HIPPO Report: Sustaining Peace as a New Imperative?

Introduction: the Imperative to Sustain Peace

As the United Nations (UN) High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) was focusing on their encompassing review, it became of particular concern to its Members that in reverse to the gains made in the 1990s and the following decade, the number of states lapsing or relapsing into armed conflict was once again on the rise.[1] Clearly, the track record of the United Nations and the international community as a whole in helping certain countries and regions to sustain and deepen peace processes has become inadequate. This includes UN peace operations. Noting that 'UN peace operations struggle to achieve their objectives,' HIPPO called for change 'to adapt them to new circumstances and to ensure their increased effectiveness.'[2]

HIPPO therefore decided to pay closer attention to issues clustered together under the term 'sustaining peace,' even though it comprises different practical tasks and issues in every specific case.[3] Panel Members were in agreement that preventing armed conflict, including relapse into conflict, should be one of the main objectives of the UN and all other actors when dealing with peace and security. As many current conflicts are increasingly complex and follow a cyclical pattern, the traditional linear thinking related to conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding (a notion that the Panel tried to avoid as it was seen as too narrow and technical) no longer applies. In their submissions to HIPPO, Brazil called for greater efforts to remove the 'illusion of sequencing' between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and Luxembourg and Thailand considered peacebuilding and peacekeeping

[1] See, for example, Louise Bosetti and Sebastian von Einsiedel, *Intrastate-based Armed Conflicts: Overview of global and regional trends (1990-2013)*, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (February 2015).
[2] United Nations, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 17 June 2015, p. 9.
[3] UN, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 2015, pp. 34-41.

Background details

This policy brief was originally written as a background paper for the Challenges Annual Forum 2015 on 'Institution- and Capacity-building for Peace: Implications of the UN's Review Panels' Recommendations for Future Missions', hosted by the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), Ministry of Defence, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, 5-6 October.

The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Challenges Forum Partnership, Secretariat or the Hosts of the Annual Forum 2015.

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complimentary and closely linked. Other Member States even encouraged the incorporation of peacebuilding tasks into a mission's first mandate.

The focus of most UN peace operations today is on operational conflict management. While their mandates tend to contain multiple tasks, the ones related to institution- and capacity-building are usually not prioritised, nor adequately resourced. Moreover, the task of addressing the root causes of the conflict, or at least its drivers, is left somewhere else. For many, such tasks should be undertaken in earnest either by other actors, or after the transformation of a peace operation into a 'peacebuilding mission.' It is, however, widely recognised that peace processes do not end after the fighting has ceased or a peace agreement has been signed, or an election has been held. Such events constitute at best major milestones, but not the conclusion of a peace process. However, the UN and other international actors have yet to fully incorporate this notion into their customary division of labour, approaches and, most importantly, practical action.

Of fundamental importance to further enhancing peace operations will be keeping issues related to sustaining peace high on the political agenda, accompanied by unabated political engagement. The HIPPO Report highlights this as a challenge of changing the mind-set of decision makers and other stakeholders towards addressing the needs of sustaining peace throughout the whole conflict cycle. There is growing consensus about moving away from peacebuilding as activities related primarily to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. Moreover, HIPPO argues for a comprehensive understanding of sustaining peace, pointing out that it is broader than peacebuilding, while peacebuilding is broader than state-building; the latter two being distinct yet interlinked. Sustaining peace, including building institutions, altogether, is a political process.[4]

Against this background, this Policy Brief—focusing on near-term priority areas—first asks the question of whether modern peace operations should engage in national institution- and capacity-building. Second, it considers whether and how the UN could overcome the fragmentation from which, the system is currently suffering and thereby achieve a more coherent approach when trying to support the building of institutions and capacity development. Third, it looks closer at some of the opportunities and challenges that UN Police (UNPOL) is facing as the institution and authority that works closest to the people on the ground. Fourth and finally, the Brief concludes by reflecting on the prospects for the implementation of HIPPO's recommendations.

[4] Lisa Denney, Richard Mallett and Dyan Mazurana, *Why service delivery matters for peacebuilding* (United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, February 2015). p.1.

Should Modern Peace Operations Deal with National Institution- and Capacity-building?

It is universally accepted that, as part of good governance, credible and effective national institutions are critical for sustainable peace. The experiences and lessons learned from the UN peacebuilding field missions launched between 1989 and 1999 led some researchers to conclude that institution-building should come as a first priority, accompanying efforts towards democratisation.[5] Successfully building such institutions and relevant capacities requires time (from two to three decades) even under the best of circumstances. But it is vital for the success of a peace operation to help put in motion from the outset a dedicated sustainable process. Strong political leverage, which a UN peace operation normally enjoys, with the support from the Security Council, should help to make this happen. This is equally important to help prevent the outbreak of armed conflict, stop hostilities and stabilize a situation in political terms. At the same time, the HIPPO Report cautions that expectations on institution-building often are unrealistically high and misgiving both in terms of outcomes and timelines, and the implications of this state of affairs for practice cannot be overlooked.

The UN has to help the country concerned identify immediate and long-term priorities for institution- and capacity-building, as well as to work out the strategy towards their implementation.

The need for (and challenge of) national ownership and legitimate institutions in the eyes of those that they are set up to serve is emphasised throughout the HIPPO Report, and to this end a more people-centred and field-oriented approach is called for. The need to consider—in addition to official ones—information institutions and other social mechanisms is an important message in this regard. The UN has to help the country concerned identify immediate and long-term priorities for institution- and capacity-building, as well as to work out the strategy towards their implementation. Supporting programmes and public institutions is critical for sustaining peace. Priorities in the mission's setting, therefore, must be few, based on joint assessments, coordinated and sequenced on the basis of what is realistic for the country to implement. To this end, the UN has moved away from the model of executing 'transitional authority' (like in Cambodia, Kosovo, East Timor), and towards one focusing on the primary political requirements which means priorities that are 'nationally owned' and respected by international actors. There is a noteworthy argument that 'the international community can impose stability, but only the host nation population can create sustainable peace.'[6] It implies a renewed emphasis of peace operation on political approaches to peace consolidation, since 'this consolidation will have to be achieved not so much through the building of formal institutions, but rather in their absence, or while they remain largely dysfunctional.'[7]

[5] See, for example, Roland Paris, *At War's End. Building Peace After Civil Conflict* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2004).
[6] United States Institute of Peace and United States Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (United States Institute of Peace Press: Washington, 2009), para. 3.3.2.
[7] Jean Arnault, *A Background to the Report of the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations*, Global Peace Operations Review, 6 August 2015, http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/a-background-to-the-report-of-the-high-level-panel-on-peace-operations/ (accessed 29 September 2015).

The above necessitates thorough assessment by national counterparts of the country's existing capacities in critical areas of governance, presumably with the involvement and support of envisaged 'UN light teams,' in-country UN family, as well as the main multi-bilateral donors and actors, including relevant regional and sub-regional organizations. In parallel, the UN system is obligated to undertake its own integrated assessment and planning effort of the overall situation in the country for senior UN decision makers. The assessment should help devise a long-term UN strategy, including on sustaining peace in the country concerned.[8] Naturally, there should also be an implementation plan and it should be re-aligned with respective national plans. Both processes should ensure the participation of local communities, women, youth and other relevant groups and their representative organizations. Despite certain sensitivities involved, both processes should try to identify the root and underlying causes of conflict and ways to address them.

Unless and until there is clarity regarding critical gaps in national capacities, the Security Council should not be in a rush to unload the full plate of various tasks onto the mandate of a new peace operation. The growing inclination by the Security Council to entertain the phased and sequencing approach is a logical and practical way towards realistic, implementable and effective mandates. Moreover, as suggested by HIPPO, decisions by the Security Council on including specific tasks related to sustaining peace into mission mandates, should be accompanied by the necessary programmatic funds to support the best way for such decisions to be implemented on the ground.

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The existence of credible and legitimate national interlocutors, as well as the selection of such interlocutors, may represent an immediate challenge for the UN. For example, in 1999, the United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste (UNAMET) initially refused to involve the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT)—an umbrella body for all Timorese resistance organizations—in handling the humanitarian crisis in the aftermath of 'Black September.'[9] Today's Libya is struggling with a problem of 'how to reassemble a functioning country after its brittle, autocratic and repressive government has been fractured and replaced with warring factions.'[10] This challenge will not go away, as countries in conflict are de facto divided communities, reflecting a breakdown of consensus about which priorities and whose needs matter. The recent agreement on a national unity government in Libya is a welcome sign that the rival political factions have realised the need to join forces in order to address the threat of Da'esh and of terrorism in general.

It should be added that HIPPO Members did discuss the possibility of 'transitional' or 'bridging' arrangements, for when a peace operation with uniformed military personnel is succeeded by a political mission focusing

[8] See United Nations, IAP Working Group, *Integrated Assessment and Planning Handbook*, December 2013.
[9] Emilia Pires and Michael Francino, 'National Ownership and International Trusteeship: The Case of Timor-Leste', in James K. Boyce and Madalene O'Donnell (eds.), *Peace and the Public Purse: Economic Policies for Postwar Statebuilding* (Lynne Rienner Publisher: Boulder, 2007), p. 124.
[10] Carlotta Gall, 'As Frustrations With Chaos Build, So Do Calls for Help', *The New York Times*, 23 September 2015, p. A10.

on tasks relating to sustaining peace such as deepening national dialogue and inclusiveness including through institution- and capacity-building. This option appears attractive, as such a mission would maintain the political momentum and provide leverage not only for the rest of the UN system, but also for the host country and donors.

How Realistic is International Coherence Towards Conflict-affected Countries?

Fragmentation of the UN system, accompanied by the multitude of other international actors, not necessarily acting in sync with each other, have become a major obstacle in rendering effective assistance to countries affected by conflict. Achieving coherence and coordination of multiple international responses is one of the key challenges in maximising their positive impact on sustaining peace.

Given HIPPO's strong belief that the UN should enable its core strength by making all its relevant components act in coherence with each other, it recommended that the Secretary-General, with the support of Member States, make a focused effort to ensure a system-wide response to the emerging needs of countries in conflict. Overcoming UN divides requires a strong vision and leadership, both within the system itself and among Member States, to focus the Organization on supporting the countries prone to, or emerging from, armed conflict in an integrated manner. Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) should ensure that mission structures and coordination arrangements with UN Country Teams provide for an integrated approach to justice, rule of law and human rights. At the moment, however, there is no unifying body that can coordinate in a comprehensive way, UN responses on sustaining peace, including institution- and capacity-building.

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is one of the increasingly versatile and effective instruments that the system has to this end. It helps to implement a wide variety of projects, actually bringing various UN actors together in the countries where it operates. The Fund focuses on four priority areas: i) supporting the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue; ii) promoting coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict; iii) economic revitalisation and generation of peace dividends; and iv) rebuilding essential administrative services and capacities.[11]

Recently, the PBF decided to support a particularly promising border project, which originated from the UN Country Teams in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, to help improve cooperation between security providers, local authorities and communities to prevent cross-border violence and assist communities in jointly addressing interdependent needs associated with social infrastructure and natural resources. The project will work with at-risk youth to increase

[11] United Nations, *PBF at a Glance, Peacebuilding Support Office*, New York, 2015, p.2. Available at http://www.unpbf.org/wp-content/uploads/PBF-Brochure-2014-FINAL-PDF-in-English_july_2015.pdf

their level of inter-ethnic tolerance and it will support active women's participation in the identification and implementation of cross-border initiatives. But the BPF is experiencing chronic and increasing shortages of resources as donors have to meet what they consider to be more urgent needs.

And whilst the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) has become more active in galvanising and facilitating various parts of the system, it is not operational and highly limited in its capacity to meet the needs. As such, the expectations that accompanied the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2005, have yet to be met. Member States may wish to revisit its mandate and modus operandi in light of the recent Report on the Peacebuilding Architecture. Rarely mentioned, but the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is deepening its work with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in the context of the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention. The Department is supporting UN Country Teams in fragile contexts. The regional offices are playing an increasingly active and useful role in helping countries to sustain peace, promoting intra-regional cooperation, inclusive political arrangements, good governance and much more.[12]

With its focus on empowering the field, HIPPO suggested that the main action towards enhanced, coordinated and integrated international response should come from the host government, supported by the SRSG and/or Special Envoy. As every organization involved in sustaining peace is relying on their own eyes and ears on the ground, it is only logical to undertake a coordination effort, as well as joint assessments where each participant brings to the table their respective experience and expertise, be it finances, security or natural resources at the country level. HIPPO Members were also in agreement that the country analyses by UN peace operations should include, as appropriate, the dynamics and drivers of corruption. All of that, in the HIPPO's view, should help develop a political roadmap, coordination framework and division of labour among relevant actors in support of national needs.

In the view of HIPPO, peace operations should pay focused attention to community dynamics, particularly in zones of conflict, deploying local offices as broadly as security conditions permit. HIPPO stressed the importance of the closest possible interaction with the communities, as well as of the support for national initiatives regarding rural and local development. Given multiple complaints during different regional consultations about UN field missions being inaccessible to local populations, HIPPO felt that it was of particular importance that missions offer their assistance to the resolution of local conflicts, and ensure regular and structured engagement with local communities, including women, youth, religious and other leaders. Moreover, a participant at the Cairo Regional Consultations, pointedly noted that 'the recurring valuable lesson is that any peacebuilding effort not anchored in

[12] HIPPO Members, who visited Dakar, Senegal, witnessed first-hand the experiences of the UN Office for West Africa in this regard.

local community will fail.'

Despite a robust normative framework for the advancement of Women, Peace and Security, many impediments stand in the way of the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the six successive resolutions.[13] Chief among these is the lack of national leadership in making this agenda a political and governance priority. Missions should integrate gender expertise within all functional components requiring gender knowledge and experience, particularly when they are involved in institution- and capacity-building.

The complexity and multitude of tasks related to sustaining peace, including institution- and capacity-building, accompanied by limited resources while needs are skyrocketing, makes it imperative for the UN to act in partnership with other international, regional and individual actors. HIPPO embraced the vision of a future of greater global and regional partnership, particularly in Africa, and strongly endorsed the need for the UN to deepen its partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations. This should enable international actors to bring together their comparative advantages and provide an integrated response throughout the conflict cycle.

...HIPPO's call for the UN to 'become a more people-centred organization in its peace operations.'

Police is the Closest Authority to the People on the Ground

Among specific substantive areas, the author recommends focusing action on police, with a particular emphasis on supporting national police development. First, this would meet HIPPO's call for the UN to 'become a more people-centred organization in its peace operations.'[14] After all, it is the police that is the closest authority to the people on the ground. Second, this is an area where the UN Police Contributing Countries (PCCs) and other actors have already made significant progress in recent years. In addition to 14,000 police deployed in the field as international staff as of early 2015, the UN used civilian experts as police specialists in Timor-Leste, specialised teams in Haiti and employed police training teams from the region to serve as UN Police, for example, in pre-crisis South Sudan. In response to demand for non-fragmented assistance by the UN system, the (now defunct) Policy Committee, chaired by the Secretary-General, decided in 2012 to create the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections (GFP) that supports assessment, planning, fundraising and delivery under the guidance of national partners and UN in-country leadership.[15] The GFP is led by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UNDP, with the participation of UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Office of the UN High

[13] United Nations, Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), S/RES/1325(2000), 31 October 2000.
[14] UN, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 2015, p. 30.
[15] The GFP is a UN Headquarters arrangement between DPKO, UNDP and other UN partners, providing joint operational country support in the police, justice and corrections areas in post-conflict and other crisis situations.

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN Women. While the GFP is clearly an answer for better coordination and joined-up approaches in the field, the operationalisation of the arrangement remains a challenge. One of the reasons is that the Secretariat has no support account budget and limited resources to support GFP assignments in non-mission settings or in Special Political Missions. In DRC, the UN Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) has been considering, together with the government, the establishment of pilot trade zones, so called 'Islands of Stability' with functioning courts, police and infrastructure.[16]

Many of the Member States provided HIPPO with views on the role of police in UN operations, which were carefully considered. Generally, it was suggested that the mandates' conceptual basis and planning capacities for policing in UN peacekeeping operations needed to be clarified and strengthened. Australia, which during its 2014 Chairmanship of the Security Council held a debate on UN Policing that resulted in a landmark thematic resolution—2185 (2014)—on the topic, along with Sweden, called for the finalisation and implementation of the DPKO/Department of Field Support (DFS) Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing. Norway called for giving the framework priority for implementation. Germany, with its deep interest in UN Police issues, emphasised the importance of mandating police components within a wider stabilization and peacebuilding strategy. Other Member States including Australia, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the European Union (EU), highlighted the role of UN Police in building the capacity of national rule of law institutions, in close collaboration with civilian capacities in areas including Security Sector Reform (SSR), rule of law, justice and corrections.

The importance of integrated planning through the Global Focal Point was highlighted in this regard by Switzerland and Sweden. Norway called for greater specialisation in the police units deployed to peace operations, including the increased application of the specialised police teams concept, while Argentina and Sweden argued that the police component should lead in combatting transnational organized crime, rather than the military component. Norway and the EU urged for greater collaboration on SSR and capacity-building operations between UN Police and other organizations such as the EU or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as with international and regional police organizations such as INTERPOL and AFRIPOL. The United States recommended to consider, especially in light of the objective to protect civilians, whether the existing ratio of troops to police and the ratio of formed police unit to individual police officers were optimal.

HIPPO advocated for a significant change in approach to police in UN peace operations.[17] Reflecting on the accumulated UN experience in the field, the existing thinking in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions

[16] From the visit by a group of HIPPO Members to the DRC.
[17] UN, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 2015, pp. 54-56.

(OROLSI)/DPKO and in extensive research,[18] the above change should entail the need for the next generation of UN Police. This generation has to be better trained and equipped in terms of protecting civilians, ensuring at least a minimum of public safety and security, while making a focused effort on helping the country concerned with police reform and building its own police capacity. The latter, no doubt, will have to include training and support in dealing with transnational organized crime, violent extremism, corruption and possible new areas, including cybercrime. These efforts will have to be accompanied by support to the justice and corrections sectors. In all of that, the HIPPO stressed, justice, the rule of law and human rights are mutually reinforcing elements in the work of UN peace operations and UN Country Teams and should be addressed in an integrated way.[19] These efforts should be gender-sensitive and embrace in full the need to involve women and take into consideration their views and concerns. The HIPPO heard from several interlocutors the critical importance for UN Police to deploy all-female Formed Police Units (FPUs), as well as the need to recruit and train more women as national police officers, given their effect on local communities.

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Since early 2014, a Strategic Guidance Framework (SGF) of policing has been developed, a document that describes in some detail 'what' UN Policing is and what its core tasks entail. With three out of its four main guidelines finalised, the Secretariat has begun breaking down the core tasks further into practical implementation manuals. All of this promises to provide 'a sound basis for cooperation between Member States and the Secretariat on standards, tasks and training requirements of formed police units, specialised teams and individual police officers; something which is eagerly anticipated by the PCC community.'[20] As part of the effort to operationalise the guidance produced, a significant challenge for the Police Division is to translate the documents into training, given that it has no training resources—neither staff, nor funds. In addition, as HIPPO noted, 'UN police officers are not usually trained to deliver police reform, and the UN's model of short-term police deployments is supply-driven and unsuited for capacity development.'[21] Another challenge will be the implementation of HIPPO's recommendation that UN Police strategies should be based on capacity assessments in the country, with a follow-up reflection in mission planning, staffing and recruitment. All of this requires strong support and cooperation from Member States, particularly when it comes to nominating experienced and qualified officers, conducting pre-deployment training, etc.

Despite those and other challenges, however, there is every reason to believe that decisive progress on UN Policing is not only possible, but forthcoming. Progress in this area presents a win-win situation for all concerned, but first

[18] See, for example, Marina Caparini, *Capacity-building and Development of Host State Police: The Role of International Police*, Challenges Forum Occasional Papers No. 3 (May 2014); William Durch, *Police in UN Peace Operations: Evolving Roles and Requirements*, Challenges Forum Occasional Papers No. 4 (August 2014); Mateja Peter (ed)., *United Nations Peace Operations: Aligning Principles and Practice, A compendium of research by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, (NUPI Report No.2, 2015).
[19] UN, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 2015, p. 54.
[20] United Nations, *The Future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, Report by the Secretary-General, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2 September 2015, p. 20, para.93
[21] UN, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People*, A/70/95-S/2015/446, 2015, p. 55.

of all, for the people on the ground. Most probably, the Secretary-General will continue to experience difficulties with mobilising the required resources from PCCs, but enhanced collaboration with the regional organizations concerned, as well as with potential donors from among 'peer countries,' should help remedy this situation. The considerable pledges made at the 2015 Leaders' Peacekeeping Summit in New York in late September look quite reassuring in that regard.

The planned Police Summit in May 2016 should become a turning point towards meeting the emerging needs, with Member States and the Secretariat coming to a common understanding about UN Policing, including the practical role of police in the protection of civilians. It seems that the Group of Friends of UN Police will have to play a key mobilising role for the success of the Summit. The intention to review UN Police performance and needs before the 2016 Summit is another welcome development.

Implementation: To Be or Not to Be?

The implementation of HIPPO's recommendations is a major challenge. The scope and diversity of proposed changes to increase the effectiveness of UN peace operations, coupled with the working culture of the Secretariat and UN bodies, would indicate that most action is going to take time. Moreover, some of the ideas and proposals have been part of the already existing divides among Member States. Fully aware of all of that, HIPPO went ahead with its recommendations. The Report is not a final word on the subject, but rather an attempt to galvanise the ongoing search by Member States, the Secretary-General and other critical actors for more effective ways to prevent and resolve armed conflict and sustain peace.

The hope is that the most interested Member States, both individually and as regional groups, become 'champions' and the driving force for reform, together with the Secretary-General.

At the same time, HIPPO's interaction with key stakeholders at headquarters and throughout regional consultations and thematic discussions confirmed that the time is ripe for a major overhaul of many aspects of UN peace operations. Sustaining this political momentum will be key to the implementation process. The hope is that the most interested Member States, both individually and as regional groups, become 'champions' and the driving force for reform, together with the Secretary-General.

The initial reaction to the HIPPO Report and its recommendations has been encouraging. Importantly, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) welcomed the HIPPO Report, noting among the principles for AU-UN partnership 'an integrated response to the full conflict cycle.' The UN's strategic partnership with the AU is underpinned by principles that apply to other regional partners, including consultative decision-making and appropriate common strategies for an integrated response to conflict, based on respective comparative advantages, transparency, accountability and respect for international norms and standards. The United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission are taking steps to finalise, in

2016, a Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which will provide a blueprint for early and continuous engagement between the organizations before, during and after conflict. It would be only logical to also foresee in that context an even stronger trilateral framework UN-AU-EU, given the scope and breadth of the cooperation of the latter with the other two organizations.

In his response to the Report, the Secretary-General stressed that unity of effort and integration must be strengthened across UN efforts in support of a mandate, including with peacebuilding activities and the UN Development Group. The Secretary-General has proposed an action plan where one of the pillars is new ways of planning and conducting peace operations to make them faster, more responsive and more accountable to the needs of countries and people in conflict, while stronger regional-global partnerships is another one. However, one should not underestimate the challenge of bringing the UN system together.

An initial analysis of the action plan by the Secretary-General shows that it focuses on what the Secretariat and the rest of the UN system are in a position to undertake or initiate on their own, but with the support from Member States and other interested actors. The Secretary-General has pledged to engage the principals of the UN on how different parts of the system can be brought together to strengthen preventive and peacebuilding work. Achieving this objective would require full support from Members of the respective Executive Boards. The Secretary-General has commissioned a review by the United Nations Development Group (although the Panel recommended an independent one) of current capacities of agencies, funds and programmes to feed into those and subsequent discussions.

Active participation of various UN partners in developing the substantive contents will be particularly important and needed in the area of national institution- and capacity-building. It should begin with setting up a process whereby specific short- and longer-term priorities for sustaining peace for every single country affected by armed conflict or prone to it are brought into the focus of the UN system and its partners. This could possibly be achieved through an institutional framework that sets up a platform for the g7+ and/or the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), possibly also in cooperation with relevant regional organizations and international financial institutions.

Of particular importance is the intention of the Secretary-General to explore with relevant host governments 'the establishment of compacts as a way to ensure understanding of our mandates and status-of-mission agreements and, as appropriate, support coordinated international engagement.'[22] While the actual contents of such compacts remains to be seen, they have been proposed by HIPPO as a practical way to ensure mutual accountability between the UN and the national authorities in question. Moreover, it would

[22] UN, *The Future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations*, A/70/357-S/2015/682, 2015, p.14.

be useful if such compacts include concrete, time-bound and measurable benchmarks of progress, along the lines of the recent proposal for 'peacebuilding audits' even though it was put forward in the context of transforming the Peacebuilding Commission into the Peacebuilding Council.[23]

Acting on such priorities is the next step, and this is where the UN system should prove its ability to provide integrated response. It remains to be seen as to whether UN agencies, funds and programmes can be flexible enough within their existing normative and operational settings. Provided all concerned act in a coordinated fashion, we should see first tangible results in one year's time. While the serving Secretary-General, whose term expires by the end of 2016, has decided to leave proposals on restructuring of the Secretariat to his successor, there is no reason for Member States and all others concerned not to think through possible ways to re-organize the Secretariat and maybe other parts of the UN system during this time.

On the other hand, there is every reason to believe that most of the proposed operational changes related to the existing field missions and Country Teams could be initiated in the near future. However, changing administrative and particularly financial arrangements with regard to peace operations may not only require time, but also the consent of the Member States—and more importantly, their agreement on the proposed improvements. The Security Council, the General Assembly and some of its relevant bodies have begun their consideration of the HIPPO Report and the related Report of the Secretary-General. It will be incumbent on their Members to reflect in their respective Committees' own reports on issues raised by HIPPO and, hopefully, move forward towards more effective and efficient peace operations. Moreover, there are emerging signs that Security Council Members and the Secretariat have begun to take on board some of the HIPPO's recommendations and proposals. Hopefully, this will transpire, for example, in making sequenced and prioritised mandates part of the Council's regular practice. Also, one would expect the relationship between the Secretariat and the Council, as well as between and among the relevant departments and components of the UN system, to become even closer and harmonious.

Member States and the rest of the UN system are also considering the proposals and recommendations contained in the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, as well as the Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.[24] Altogether, there are encouraging signs that the UN and its Members are intensifying their search for more effective action and upscaling their efforts toward armed conflict. There is a collective call for urgent change in how the international community conceives of its peace and security instruments, how they are applied and how different actors and stakeholders

[23] *Confronting the Crisis of Global Governance*, Report of the Commission on Global Security, Justice and Governance, Supported by The Hague Institute for Global Justice and the Stimson Center (June 2015) p.92 .
[24] United Nations, *The Challenges of Sustaining Peace*, The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, 29 June 2015, and UN Women, *Preventing Conflict Transforming Justice Securing the Peace*, A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 14 October 2015.

work together to maximise impact. Overall, provided the Secretary-General, Member States and all other actors involved remain actively engaged and focused, prospects for bringing UN peace operations to the next level of effectiveness currently look quite promising and reassuring.

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